

Clan Graham Newsletter

DECEMBER 12, 1985

CHINO, CALIFORNIA

Clan Graham members, this is the first edition of a newsletter to be published quarterly to members of Clan Graham. Its purpose is to report anything of interest to the Clan. Items of genealogical interest, historical information, Scottish activities both here and in Scotland, questions and answers about Scottish attire, availability of Scottish books and music, and activities within our own clan are only some of the topics that will be covered.

While I have undertaken the task of publishing this first issue, I know of several other members of our Clan who have an uncommon ability to take over the job. Perhaps in time, they will. In the meantime, I will get it going, but your participation is urgently needed. Please send newsletter inputs to my address: Bill E. Graham, 12698 Roswell Avenue, Chino, CA 91710. I will gladly publish anything that you send me, and please do not worry about proper grammar, spelling, etc.; we will get by.

The Scottish American, a newspaper published in Morgantown, W.V., is conducting a contest for Newsletters of Clan societies for 1986. Awards will be made in several categories: best new newsletter, most-improved newsletter, most innovative newsletter, best coverage of a single event, etc. Quite possibly our Clan could take one of those awards - Grahams are not noted for losing!

WHO ARE THE GRAHAMS?

The Grahams in America are of Scottish origin. A book that I am publishing will give a definitive account of the Grahams from their advent into recorded history about the year 378 A.D. in Scotland, to their enforced relocation in Ireland, to their settlement on the eastern shores of the colonies, and on westwardly to the American frontiers. Meanwhile, since it will probably be another two years before the book is published, a thumbnail sketch follows.

At first the Grahams settled in Virginia, but soon moved into North Carolina. The head of that family was William Graham, known as William Graham the Signer, because he was one of the colonists who disagreed with the presense of the Britfish in the colonies, and who signed the Mecklinburg Declaration of Independence. That Declaration and the one signed in Philadelphia launched the colonies into their Revolutionary War.

William the Signer had nine children. The oldest three, John, James, and Richard, were sent to western North Carolina to look after their fathers homestead in the state of Franklin that had been illegally formed

and was in violation of a treaty with the Cherokee Indians. I descend from the oldest of the three, John, and have had no record of the other eight children of William the Signer until I started corresponding with Janice Emmons Lavender of Conroe, Texas, who is a descendent of the 8th child, Ezekiel Graham.

John Graham married Mary (?) in Surry County, North Carolina, where their first five children were born. They were Mary, Jesse I, Jane (Jaine), Jehu, and John II. In 1915 John moved with his family to an area of Alabama presently known as Jackson County, but then inhabited by Cherokees. David, Jennie, Gideon and Martha were born in Jackson County.

Jesse Graham I, from whom I descend, was born in 1804, and in 1827 married Martha Jane "Patsy" Fanning of Tennessee. She was a relative of James Fanning of the ill-fated Goliad contingency of the Texas Army in its battle for independence. Jesse and Martha had eleven children: Sarah Emeline, Isaac Jackson, Curtis Beason I, John Curtis, Olgus Denton, Martha Jane, William Smith, Jesse Abner II, Hulda Ann, Benjamin Franklin, all of whom were born in Jackson County, Alabama, and the last child, James Monroe, was born in Rusk, Texas. A biography of each of those children will be published in my book. If any of you have any information about any of them, please get it to me as soon as possible so that it can be included in the book.

Jesse moved in 1849 to Rusk, Texas, and in 1855 he relocated in Coryell County, Texas, on the Cowhouse River. Curtis Graham I, the child from whom I descend, married Elizabeth Thornton in 1855 in Rusk County, Texas, and they had 6 children who survived: Mary Ellen, Harrison, Jesse II, John E., Walton, and Sarah (Sally) Emaline. Elizabeth Thornton died in 1874, and Curtis B. I married Melissa Swanner for his second wife. From this union came: Elizabeth Melissa, Margaret Isobel (Belle), Ella V., Curtis Beason II, Isaac Emeriah, Julia L., and Nancy. Curtis Beason Graham the Second was my father. He was born in 1881, served four years in the Army during the Spanish American War period, worked a few years as a bookkeeper and barber, married my mother, Madie Eva Johnson, and then farmed near Killeen, Texas, until his retirement when he moved to Alvarado, Texas.

I am Bill Graham, sixth of seven children. I am a Mechanical Engineer, and do management and engineering consulting. However, my credits for which I am most proud is the knowledge I have obtained from 31 years of family history study. I have traced our family for 31 generations, and have a biography

of each family head back to Sir William de Graeme in 1100 in Scotland. I am writing a book on the history of the Grahams, which will likely be several volumes. Bibliography for my book is about 130 books, and countless numbers of microfilms, census reports, birth records, mortality reports, books of deeds, and legal documents of every description. I hope to have the manuscript finished next year and have it published the following year. I will offer it for sale to the members of Clan Graham at cost as my contribution to our family. My other life ambition is to organize a formal Clan Graham society here in America. I have already corresponded with the Duke of Montrose, the head of the Graham Clan all over the world, and have set some wheels in motion to organize our Clan here.

ODYSSEY TO SCOTLAND

In this part of my newsletter I will report a trip that two of my sisters, Hazel (Graham) Wilkinson and Jeannie (Graham) Purl, and I took this summer to Scotland.

To better understand the significance of some of the places we visited, I am attaching a map of Scotland, a short description of the Scottish people, and a brief history of Scotland. All these topics are covered in depth in my book on Graham History, but in the meantime perhaps these thumbnail sketches will be helpful.

Jeannie, Hazel, and I had planned our trip to Scotland for a year. None of us had been before, but we prepared ourselves with items from our Graham history, Scottish and British history, and of course all the usual tourist-type information. And of course we all had several friends who had been to Scotland and who passed on a mass of tips and hints for us. Following this narrative of our trip I will pass judgement on the value of those "tips and hints"!

We arrived in London on August 23, and left on September 7th. During that period of time we rented a station wagon and covered the face of England and Scotland. Of course we saw the major tourist attractions, but our main interest was in seeing those things that have a significance in Graham history. We stayed in "Bed & Board" places, which I heartedly recommend because: (1) They are economical (7-10 Pounds, or about \$10 per night); (2) Judiciously chosen, they are delightful places to stay; (3) Their breakfasts are excellent; and (4) Staying in the B&Bs provides the opportunity to meet and mix with the natives, who we found to be friendly and courteous. Some of my fondest experiences of the trip were conversations with the natives; they are delightful.

WHO ARE THE SCOTS?

Scotland and its people came into recorded history in A.D. 84, characteristically resisting foreign domination as they were to do until 1603. By that time the Romans had penetrated as far as modern Sterling. Calgacus, the native leader, exhorted his men in terms similar to those of later Scottish heroes, Wallace

and Bruce, "The invaders loot and massacre and call it government. They make a wilderness and call it peace." The ensuing Battle of Mons Graupius near Stirling checked the Romans and they retired behind their fortified line stretching from what is now Glasgow to Edinburgh.

Christianity was to unite the different tribes of Scotland into that conscious entity we now know as "Scottish". Those tribes were the Scots, Picts, Britons, and Celts, warrior in name, warrior in Scottish history. Perhaps our Scottish love of colourful tartans and our age-old martial spirit came from this racial fusion. Angles and vikings from the 7th century onwards and Normans from the 10th were assimilated into our race, giving us much, and taking much. By about the twelfth century intermarriage and the Christian faith made Scotland into the united nation it is today.

We Scots look on Wallace and Bruce as Scotland's greatest heroes. Wallace started the fight for Scotland's freedom, and Bruce finished it. Scotland was in the power of Edward I of England when Wallace rose against him and trounced the English at the Battle of Stirling Bridge in 1296. But, Wallace was later captured and executed. A few months later Robert the Bruce, Scotland's great patriot king, arose and was crowned King of Scots in 1306. He and his Scots beat the English finally at the Battle of Bannockburn on 24 June 1314, and although the English did not give up trying again and again for the next 300 years, they found Scotland to be absolutely unconquerable. It all ended in 1603 when the Scottish king, James VI, also took over as king of England. Before the Battle of Bannockburn the Scots prayed, as they were to do so on many a battlefield all over the world. Edward II, the English King, said: "See, they are asking for mercy." "True," was the answer, "but not from you. Those men will win or perish." There is a large statue at Sterling of King Robert the Bruce.

In 1371 Bruce's grandson, Robert, became King of Scots and started the famous Stewart dynasty, which has done so much for Scotland, England, and the world. The Stewarts ruled until 1603 when the crown was united with the crown of England. It was a time of growth for Scotland. Architecture flourished, and outstanding memorials from that time are still with us today: stately churches, carved crosses; fine castles; town-houses and municipal buildings, as well as famous bridges like Devorgilla's at Dumfries, built about 1270 and still in use after 700 years. Literature, theology, philosophy and other branches of learning were much in evidence. The eminent Franciscan, Duns Scotus, 1265-1308, from Duns, Berwickshire, ranks still as one of the world's greatest theologians. St Andrews University was founded in 1411, Glasgow in 1453, Aberdeen in 1494, Edinburgh in 1582 - all of which flourished for more than 200 years before the founding of the University of London. In 1505 the College of Surgeons was founded in Edinburgh, while England had to wait till 1540 for something

comparable. Scottish clans have spread their precious heritage not only to other parts of Scotland but to England, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the United States and elsewhere. The Scottish love for music and dancing is particularly endearing to the world. Many other nationalities have adopted with delight the Scot's stirring pipe-music and gracious dances. For ourselves, our Scottish hearts beat higher when we hear the skirl of the pipes with their haunting ethereal melodies with the beat and throb of drum. Then, with martial bearing, kilts all swinging, the marching Highland men come stepping out so strongly to the stirring strains of Scotland The Brave: "Hark when the night is falling. Hear, hear the pipes are calling, -----" As late as WWII, Scottish regiments marched into battle in kilts and full Scottish attire, accompanied by a full bagpipe band leading the troops in historical fashion - out front! Documented sources relate how the Nazi infantrymen, upon hearing the bagpipes, would throw down their weapons and run because they knew that behind the pipes were killed Scottish warriors who knew no fear, and who had rather fight with targe, dirk, and basket sword than with automatic weapons!

HISTORY OF GRAHAMS IN SCOTLAND:

A thumbnail sketch of Graham History follows so that you can appreciate the places we visited.

Originally Normans, Grahams were given lands in the Lothian section of Scotland in the early 1100s by King David. They enlarged those estates through good management and marriage, and distinguished themselves as leaders and as warriors on the battlefields for the Scottish cause. King Robert Bruce exchanged an estate at Montrose, Scotland, with the Grahams for some of their land, so the head of the Graham Clan was given the title of "Lord of Montrose", and since titles are preferred over surnames, the head of the Graham Clan has since been known as "Montrose". A later Graham was raised to "Earl of Montrose", a later one to "Marquis of Montrose", and finally the Fifth Marquis was raised to a Duke; and he still is. The head of the Graham Clan is the duke of Montrose, whose estates cover the portion of Scotland around Loch Loman, where Hazel, Jeannie, and I visited. Several years ago the duke went to Rhodesia as a member of the House of Lords in Parliament, but disassociated himself with the south African government when Ian Smith and followers declared their independence from Britian. The Duke remained there to administer his estates until a few weeks ago when he returned to Scotland.

Back in the 15th century, our direct ancestor, a brother of the Lord of Montrose, married a grand-daughter of the King of Scotland. His name was Sir Patrick Graham, and he became the owner of several very large estates in western Scotland and was entitled, "Earl of Strathearn and Menteith". He had a son named Malise Graham, and soonafter was killed by one of the Drummonds. A brother of Sir Patrick Graham, Sir Robert Graham,

became the legal guardian of the young Malise Graham. The King died, and one of his illegitimate sons assumed the crown, much to the chagrin of all of Scotland. Knowing that Malise was the legal heir to the throne, the illegitimate son (then King) had Malise sent to London as a hostage, and took all of the estates away from Malise except the small one of Menteith. That act invoked extreme anger in Sir Robert Graham, who traveled to Edinburgh and attempted to arrest the King in open Parliament. He did not succeed, which made him more irate. Soon after, he and some of his clansmen fought their way into the summer castle at Perth and Sir Robert killed the King in a swordfight. Sir Robert was captured by the supporters of the illegitimate king, tortured mercilessly for 3 days, and finally executed. Montrose went to the aid of Malise and arranged his release, after which Malise (then the Earl of Menteith) married royally. One of his sons, Sir John Graham, our ancestor, fought many battles trying to restore the crown and deprived estates to the Grahams, and fought with such valor that he became known as "Sir John the Bright Sword", but he lost in the end. He and his clan were sent to the Debateable Lands on the border of Scotland and England, where they became reivers. Details of all the above events will be given in my book on Graham History when it is published.

I have enclosed this photocopy of an excerpt from our last Clan Graham Newsletter to acquaint you with the history of Scotland, and to give you a brief introduction with the history of the Grahams.

I have several books whose authors state that the Grahams are one of the most gallant families in Scottish history.